

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

## **LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

Claims 1-13 (cancelled).

14. (New) A device for predicting the starting ability of a vehicle having an internal combustion engine and a starter which is supplied with electrical power by a vehicle battery, comprising:

a battery state detection device which determines a state of charge of the vehicle battery;

a first device which uses a discharge current curve to determine a charge drained from the vehicle battery during a predefined time period when the vehicle is shut off;

a second device which calculates the state of charge of the vehicle battery after the predefined time period;

a third device that determines an electrical battery variable in which a characteristics map of the electrical battery variable is stored as a function of the state of charge of the vehicle battery, a value of the electrical battery variable, which is present after the predefined time period, being read out from the characteristics map; and

a prediction device which uses the read out value of the electrical battery variable to determine whether or not the vehicle is able to start after the predefined time period.

15. (New) The device as recited in claim 14, wherein the characteristics map of the electrical battery variable is one of a current, voltage, or power characteristics map.

16. (New) The device as recited in claim 14, wherein the characteristics map of the electrical battery variable is a function of the temperature.

17. (New) The device as recited in claim 16, further comprising:

a temperature prediction device to predict a temperature anticipated to prevail after the predefined time period, the predicted temperature being taken into account in the determination of the electrical battery variable.

18. (New) The device as recited in claim 14, wherein a characteristics map of a mechanical variable of a starting system is stored in the prediction device.

19. (New) The device as recited in claim 14, wherein a torque characteristics map of a starting system and an engine torque characteristics curve are stored in the prediction device.

20. (New) The device as recited in claim 19, wherein the engine torque characteristics map of the starting system is a function of the state of charge of the vehicle battery.

21. (New) The device as recited in claim 19, wherein the torque characteristics map of the starting system is a function of the temperature.

22. (New) The device as recited in claim 14, further comprising:

a measurement device to measure an electrical variable of the vehicle battery during a starting operation, the measured variable being used to correct the stored characteristics map.

23. (New) The device as recited in claim 14, wherein characteristic curves for different starting systems are stored in the third device that determines the electrical battery variable.

24. (New) A method for predicting the starting ability of a vehicle having an internal combustion engine and a starter which is supplied with electrical power by a vehicle battery, the method comprising:

determining an instantaneous state of charge of the vehicle battery via a battery state detection device;

determining a charge drained from the vehicle battery during a predefined time period when the vehicle is shut off;

calculating the state of charge of the vehicle battery after the predefined time period;

determining an electrical battery variable based on the calculated state of charge of the vehicle battery from a characteristics map stored in a device; and

determining whether or not the vehicle is able to start after the predefined time period via a prediction device which determines the starting ability on the basis of the battery variable determined from the characteristics map.

25. (New) The method as recited in claim 24, further comprising:

storing a characteristics map for a starting current in the device for determining an electrical battery variable as a function of the state of charge of the vehicle battery, a starting current, which occurs after the predefined time period, being determined from the characteristics map.

26. (New) The method as recited in claim 24, further comprising:

comparing, by a prediction device, an engine torque and a torque of a starting system in order to determine a torque acting in the future.